

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173696

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YO, US

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON JACK ANDERSON COLUMN

REF: A) 76 BELGRADE 2671 NOTAL, B) 76 BELGRADE 6271,
C) BELGRADE 4424 -

1. YOU WILL HAVE BY SEPARATE CABLE FROM USIS THE TEXT
OF JACK ANDERSON'S JULY 25 COLUMN REGARDING ALLEGED YUGO-
SLAV EFFORTS TO USE THE TOTH CASE AS A "LEVER" TO INDUCE
US TO ESTABLISH FORMAL LIAISON BETWEEN THE FBI AND YUGO-
SLAV SECURITY FORCE. HERE IS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED
FOR USE AT THE NOON BRIEFING ON JULY 25 BUT WHICH WAS
NOT USED SINCE NO QUESTION ON THAT SUBJECT AROSE.

BEGIN TEXT:

Q: JACK ANDERSON THIS MORING ASSERTS THAT THE YUGOSLAV
--- SECRET POLICE (UDB) OFFERED TO RELEASE AMERICAN
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--- BUSINESSMAN LASZLO TOTH, WHEN HE WAS HELD BY THEM
--- IN 1975, IF THE U.S. WOULD AGREE TO A YUGOSLAV RE-
--- QUEST FOR LIAISON WITH THE FBI. CAN YOU CONFIRM
--- ANDERSON'S REPORT?

A: IT IS CORRECT THAT THE YUGOSLAVS HAVE FROM TIME TO
TIME IN RECENT YEARS, PROPOSED A FORMAL ARRANGEMENT FOR

EXCHANGING INFORMATION BETWEEN THE FBI AND THEIR AUTHORITIES. HOWEVER, THESE PROPOSALS WERE NEVER EXPLICITLY TIED TO TOTH'S RETENTION OR HIS RELEASE.

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. POSITION ON SUCH AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM?
--- GRAM?

A: CERTAIN EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION ARE MADE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS AND THROUGH INTERPOL IN CONNECTION WITH OUR OBLIGATION TO PROTECT YUGOSLAV MISSIONS AND DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL IN THE UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT BEEN PREPARED TO ENTER INTO A DIRECT EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN U.S. AND YUGOSLAV POLICE AUTHORITIES.

Q: WHY NOT? IS THIS SOMETHING YOU ARE PREPARED TO
--- RECONSIDER?

A: WE BELIEVE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS ARE ADEQUATE.

END TEXT.

2. THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS ARE UNCLASSIFIED. THE FOLLOWING IS CONFIDENTIAL. FYI. TODAY'S POST ARTICLE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT ANDERSON WAS IN TOUCH WITH FORMER AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN ON THIS SUBJECT. FOR INSIGHT
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INTO THE FORMER AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT OF DIRECT LIAISON SEE REFERENCES A AND B. WE ARE CURRENTLY REVIEWING PROS AND CONS OF SOME KIND OF LIAISON ARRANGEMENT IN LIGHT OF YOUR PROPOSAL IN PARA 3 OF REF C. VANCE

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